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# Boehner Rules Out Negotiations on Immigration

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WASHINGTON — Signaling an end to the push for major immigration legislation this year, Speaker [John A. Boehner](#) on Wednesday ruled out negotiations between the House and the Senate on an expansive immigration overhaul similar to one approved by the Senate with bipartisan support in June.

Speaking to reporters, Mr. Boehner said that while House Republicans were working on a “common-sense, step-by-step approach in terms of how we deal with immigration,” they were unwilling to enter into talks with the Senate on a broad bill that would include a path to citizenship for the 11 million immigrants already in the country illegally.

“The idea that we’re going to take up a 1,300-page bill that no one had ever read, which is what the Senate did, is not going to happen in the House,” he said. “And frankly, I’ll make clear we have no intention of ever going to conference on the Senate bill.”

With few legislative days left in 2013 and nearly all the focus on the [health care law](#) and House-Senate budget talks, Mr. Boehner said House Republicans had little interest in detouring on to immigration legislation that divides their party. His stance means the immigration fight would be pushed into 2014. If there was to be movement, it would probably have to come earlier in the year before the midterm elections get too close.

But the speaker, in an encounter earlier Wednesday with two young immigrants without legal status, did indicate he continued to see immigration legislation as a priority. The pair, brought to the United States as children by their parents, approached him at Pete’s Diner, his dawn breakfast haunt, to urge him to support a broad immigration overhaul.

“How would you feel if you had to tell your kids at the age of 10 that you were never coming home?” said Carmen Lima, a 17-year-old who explained that she had a similar conversation with her father, who was here illegally, at that age.

“I’m trying to find some way to get this thing done,” Mr. Boehner told her. “It’s, uh, as you know, not easy, not going to be an easy path forward. But I’ve made it clear since the day after the election it’s time to get this done.”

The Republican-controlled House had already been working on a piecemeal approach to immigration legislation, in which it would take up individual — and more narrow — bills, like a measure to improve border security or to overhaul the guest worker program. An aide to Mr. Boehner said that he was not ruling out negotiations with the Senate on any immigration bill, but simply throwing water on the idea that the House would pass one or two smaller bills and then merge them in a conference committee with the Senate’s larger plan.

The speaker's comments also were intended to quell the concerns of some hard-line members who feared that supporting even a narrow border security bill could be used as a "Trojan horse" that would lead to the House's being forced to consider a larger, Senate-influenced bill that endorses what they consider "amnesty." Mr. Boehner's remarks came less than a week after another member of his leadership team, Representative Kevin McCarthy of California, the No. 3 Republican, said that the House would not have time before the end of the year to vote on any immigration legislation.

Representative Steve Israel of New York, the chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, said all he cared about was the final product. "The process is irrelevant," he said. "How John Boehner gets to a vote, and when he gets to a vote, is immaterial to us. We will help him with the vote, but he has to get something to the floor."

As the immediate prospects for a bill dimmed, one of the leading Republican senators behind the effort criticized the administration's handling of border security. John McCain, Republican of Arizona, said at a confirmation hearing for Jeh C. Johnson, the nominee for secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, that the administration had refused to provide information on how it was policing the border.

After Mr. Johnson stopped short of committing to provide the border data without consulting with homeland security officials, Mr. McCain said that he would not vote to confirm him until Mr. Johnson gave a "yes answer" to sharing the information.

"How can we carry out our functions of oversight if we don't get the kind of information we need to make the decisions that this committee to make?" Mr. McCain said.

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